



THE BLESSED VIRGIN AND SAINT ANNE.

[Murillo.]



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Possibilities.

As in the rough the sculptor sees his art
And dreams of beauty o'er the unhewn wood,
The gaze of God views in the human heart
The possibilities He shall make good.
In marble in the quarry, or the trees
Wild in the forest, or the precious stone
Hidden in quartz, His prescience foresees
A priceless glory to adorn His throne.
Hew, Lord, and fashion to Thy will's desire
This heart of stone, this gnarled block of sin;
From passion's gravel sift the gem, its fire
Enclose the setting of Thy love within.

MOTHER ST. JEROME.

Religion and Optimism.

THE hope of a speedy and satisfactory peace—if it was ever seriously entertained either in these countries or elsewhere—has been gradually abandoned, and it is now practically admitted by all parties that the war will be indefinitely prolonged. Each of the belligerent nations has called forth all its available resources, and is pressing its whole strength into the struggle, so that it has become for each a matter of life or death. None can afford to weaken in its purpose, or to slacken in its efforts, for that would mean not merely the loss of territory or prestige, but annihilation. The struggle on the western front has been for a very considerable time at a deadlock, though the strain is unceasing, while on the eastern side it has been more or less sporadic. The centre of activity has passed to the Balkans and Greece, and taken an easterly direction to Mesopotamia and Persia, thus giving rise to a still more crucial and awful question: will the Far East be stirred into life and activity by the world-war, and pour out its vast hordes of men upon the impoverished and decadent nations of the west? To discern the approach of yellow in the present complex colouring of events, cannot be lightly assigned to a jaundiced eye.

But at all events the signs of the times are alarming in the extreme, and we cannot dismiss them by a contemptuous sneer at gloom or pessimism. He is no optimist who steadily ignores patent facts, nor is he a pessimist who rationally estimates the gravity of the situation. It is certainly not pessimism to assert that the issue is exceedingly more complex and involved at this moment than it was twelve months ago. Even if one side became suddenly and overwhelmingly victorious, if, for example, the French and British had thrust back the German armies through France and Belgium, and driven them broken and despairing across the Rhine, and that the Russians had occupied Constantinople and sung a *Te Deum* in Sancta Sophia, it is difficult to see how in such a contingency the various and conflicting interests of the conquering nations would be finally settled without a further appeal to the sword. It is well known that the bond which binds the allied groups has frequently been very strained, and that it has only been the sense of the extreme danger of disunion that so far has held them together. The tremendous pressure of the enemy has kept them from being divided among themselves. If and when that pressure is removed, and the day comes for the division of spoils and the settlement of debts and the partition of territory, the contingency of a prolongation of the war is, to say the least, not unthinkable.

RELIGION AND OPTIMISM

There is no great pleasure for any but a mind confirmed in gloom and pessimism to revel in melancholy fears and forebodings, and my purpose in touching upon the extreme gravity of the present state of things all over the world is not to depress hearts already overcharged with anxiety, nor to augment the fears of the timid, but to point out how religion alone can assist and encourage those who know its truth and power, calmly to look upon and hopefully to sustain and cheerfully to encounter not only the present grievous anxieties, but the worst and gloomiest possibilities.

The great power of religion to steady the human mind in the appalling and unprecedented events through which we are passing, lies in the fact that it confers on him who loves and follows it the faculty of looking at and appreciating mundane things as they are seen in eternity. It so broadens his thought that he thinks not merely imperially but eternally. It lifts him above the earth to a clearer and serener atmosphere where the noise and din of war are unheard, and from which the rise and fall of empires are seen only as perturbations in the march of events through which a great and final destiny shall be achieved. We do great violence to ourselves and the best instincts of our nature when, as we habitually do, we treat what we call time as if it were everlasting, although our reason assures us that it is not so, and invest things that belong only to the present and passing order with the attributes of immortality. We keep our eyes narrowed within the very limited vision of the present life and the present world, and then go on to speak of 'undying fame,' of 'immortal honour,' of great men finding a place 'among the immortals,' of loving 'forever,' of the 'deathless dead.' Such expressions are not merely graceful tributes in the language of figure as we know them to be, but denote a real effort of the human mind to represent things of real worth only in the present order under the form and colour of immortality. The chief function of our holy religion is to train us to distinguish between what is solely of the present, passing and relatively trivial, and what there is in it that shall be enduring. It therefore creates in the heart of the religious man a power not of ignoring or being insensible to passing events, such as pain, death, and the various calamities of this life, nor to honour, fame, love, success, but a power of sustaining adversity and appreciating the gifts of fortune at their relative value, and of regarding all such things as but the temporary appurtenants of a state of things that is transitory, and that is meant only to be preparatory to a higher and more perfect order that shall endure.

It follows therefore that however much the calamities of the present life may press upon and afflict a person of religious convictions, the vision of the future and perfect life with which religion endues him inspires him with constant hope and expectation, and the more pressing and grievous the distress, the nearer he apprehends and welcomes the season

of deliverance. Under this aspect this most terrible and sanguinary of all wars is in reality a fulfilment of our Lord's utterances, and therefore a further assurance to the whole world of the nearer approach of His second coming. It is not permitted us to attempt with any sense of knowledge to foretell that day and hour which He Himself has told us, "no one knoweth, no not the angels of heaven, but the Father alone," but it is permitted us reverently and with joyful expectation to interpret the signs which He has vouchsafed to us as tokens and assurances of His great promise, and as a strong confirmation of our belief and hope.

For some time before the war it was widely maintained that the world would work out its own deliverance without any direct intervention on the part of Almighty God, and it was preached in England by leading Protestant teachers in language so flippant and sarcastic that I will not transcribe it here, that we need not expect any such fearful tokens of the second coming of Christ, as He Himself foretold. These were looked upon merely as parables which had no significance or appeal to modern men of intellect and culture, and unfortunately through the want of definite religious instruction in the churches and schools, the same evil conceptions deeply affected the great masses of the people. But let us hope that the growing pressure and distress of this awful visitation of the war will send people back to the gospels to read the signs of the times and the solemn declaration which He who uttered them for our guidance and comfort affixed to them: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

The expectation of the second coming of our Lord, especially in a time of visitation and affliction like the present, has ever been a leading thought of Catholic minds and a chief principle of Christian life. We know that it was enjoined by our Lord Himself on His followers that they should ever watch and be prepared for His return. The first Christians lived in constant expectation of that great event, and therefore interpreted all that occurred to them and in the world about them in the light of His great promise. And although that promise has been delayed, and succeeding periods of great calamity, such as the Arian heresy, or the schism of the West and so many others, were not, as the event proved, the immediate forerunners of His appearance, they were signs which contained a warning, and an exhortation to due preparation, and they who read and understood them as such were only fulfilling His behest. And so, every great calamity is an assurance that His promise will be fulfilled, and every new one a stronger testimony that time grows shorter and the day of His appearance is coming more swiftly. While therefore we cannot tell for certain that this terrific war is the prelude to the other woes that will precede His coming, as we cannot tell how long it may last, nor what new and strange complications may arise, nor what other nations and powers

may be involved, we are at all events convinced that it is a portent—that nothing at all approaching it in magnitude has ever been witnessed on this world before, and that it surpasses the wildest imagination of man to conceive anything in the shape of war on a vaster and more destructive scale.

And thus every true and faithful member of Holy Church finds his surest comfort and strongest hope in the fact that the longer the war is prolonged, and the more the nations of the earth are involved in it, the greater assurance it is to him of the end of this period of transition and the beginning of the great and final triumph. We do not nor can we desire the continuance of war for its own sake, for that were barbarous and irrational in the extreme, we still may hope for peace and pray, as we are bound to do, that it may be secured, we abhor the unnatural strife among those who should be brethren, we deeply sympathise with the afflicted and bereaved, and as citizens of France or of England, or of Italy or of Germany we hope and pray for the success of the land that bore us, or as neutrals desire the success of those in which we have larger and deeper interests, but while the Catholic must, from his temporary and passing interest and affection for some particular nation, be zealous for its preservation and liberty, he must above all and before all recollect that he has no abiding city or nation here, that his dwelling place is eternity, and his permanent home in the blessed city of God.

If he be a lover of Jesus Christ he will earnestly long for the final triumph of Him who is destined to lead His faithful ones to victory and associate them with Himself in His Sovereignty—subduing His enemies and putting them under His feet. Christ is the anointed King of the earth. His dominion is not yet entirely accomplished, but days and years and ages are little to Him who is eternal, and whose final triumph is assured. So we pray for its near fulfilment, and if the war, horrible as it is to our minds now, be the means through which it is in His inscrutable designs to be fulfilled—then blessed be the war, however unbelievers may malign and condemn us. We desire nothing more ardently than to behold our King vindicate Himself before the world, and proclaim the final power and eternal value of what He appraised—poverty, pain, obedience, prayer and sacrifice—all accounted of little worth by the passing world. We desire, too, that the trials of His Church should cease—who does not desire it?—to see the Bride of Christ, so long hated, torn, persecuted, outlawed and oppressed as she now is, and must be during the present state of things, rising

red with wounds and splendid,
All her breast and brow made beautiful with scars,
Burning bare as naked daylight undefended
In her hands for spoils her splintered prison bars.
In her eyes the light and fire of long pain ended
In her lips a song as of the morning stars.

STANISLAUS CURRAN, C.P.

Lourdes Shrines in the Far and Near East.



A little Singhalese
Client of Mary.

OUR Lady of Lourdes—we are keeping her Feast with somewhat heavy hearts, as we think on the unnumbered ranks of our gallant Irish dead, lying cold and still in many a roadside cemetery in France and Flanders and the Near East! Yet who shall say how many deaths on the battlefield have not been solaced by her sweet consolations, as the Irish soldier, who so often has gone into battle with her hymns on his lips, invoked Our Blessed Mother for the last time with his dying breath?

Well, Irish Catholics can afford to think of them to-day with mingled grief and pride as they say a *requiescant* for the brave dead, and pray they may be remembered by the Mother of all Consolation. Meanwhile, it is not amiss to reflect in how many Lourdes shrines Mary is honoured in regions where we should least expect to find her sanctuaries. For nothing is more extraordinary than the way devotion to Our Lady of Lourdes has penetrated the most remote corners of the Far East.

One of the most popular Indian shrines of Lourdes is at Madu, Ceylon, where crowds flock annually to the pilgrimage held in Our Lady's honour in that beautiful glade where her grotto nestles amid a leafy paradise beside a tranquil lakelet, making an ideal retreat for her who is herself the Mother of sweet Peace. Singhalese Catholics are very devout to Our Lady, and nowhere do they show it more than at this, her favoured shrine of Madu, where you may see the little Singhalese children gathering round the grotto, repeating their *Aves* full reverently.

Nor is India behind-hand, and already is Lourdes becoming a familiar word to Indians, even though they be not of the number of Mary's children. At Nagpore there is a statue of Our Lady of Lourdes before the Mission school-house. "Ah, Sister," cried some little pagan school-children to one of the good nuns, on hearing of their little brother's grave illness, "surely we will go to the *Deva Mada* (Mother of God), and she will look after our brother." And bearing incense and flowers in their childish hands, these little heathens offer their prayers to the Mother they know so little,

yet revere so whole-heartedly, and the faith of these little stray lambs from the True Fold is rewarded, for the dying child recovered miraculously soon after!

And their pagan elders, with a dim pathetic glimpse of what it means to have the protection of the Mother of God, make pilgrimages of their own, poor creatures, and remembering the wonderful miracles of healing wrought at the shrine, plead, however ignorantly, for their own sore needs. And who shall say they will not find the true way, since they thus come to the safest of all guides?



Singhalese Girls.

Cures, too, are obtained from Our Lady of Lourdes sanctuary at Myazu, Tango, Osaka, Japan, where a convert belonging to the Mission was sometime ago given over by the doctors as incurable. But the patient addressed fervent invocations to Our Lady of Lourdes, and after receiving the Last Sacraments, drank some Lourdes water, to find herself soon after rapidly recovering from what everyone believed to be a fatal malady. So we may look for growing devotion among Japanese Catholics to Our Lady as the Mother of Healing.

Meantime, our gallant Missionaries in Japan are wondering how long it will be before Japan becomes Catholicised, for there is a wide field for Mission enterprise among her people—among whom the traditions of their sixteenth century Catholicity are not by any means lost. Perhaps if Catholics at home realised how responsive these children of the Far East are to the Church's teaching, they would think more about the need of planting many another shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes in the land of St. Francis Xavier.

The "Far East," yes, Lourdes devotions flourish there, but what will be a still greater surprise to many readers is that they are not unknown in the Near East, and just now everything that concerns the latter has a poignant interest for Irish Catholics, considering how many of their brave compatriots have fared to that terrible battlefield. But Our Lady of Lourdes has a shrine in the very spot of all others that one might least expect to find such a sanctuary—in Constantinople itself!

Hardly less astonishing will it be to hear that the shrine is frequented by many a devout Mohammaden, for the spotless Mother of Christ is specially revered by Moslems, whilst the Koran itself recognises her Immaculate Conception, in thus describing the Angelic Salutation: "God has chosen thee: He has rendered thee free from all stain: He has selected thee out of all the women of the universe." This devotion

to Our Lady is in pathetic contradiction to the Mussulman attitude towards the teaching of her Divine Son, yet, what better preparation for receiving the truth of Christianity from the Catholic Church than this reverence for her who is the Mother of Divine Wisdom—the dedication, remember, of what is now the great Mosque of Constantinople, but to be, one may hope, in happier times to come, once more a Christian sanctuary!

Meanwhile, the devotion to Our Lady of Lourdes is being kept up with vigour at a shrine specially dear to all Egyptian Catholics—for it is that of Matariyeh, the spot where tradition tells us the Holy Family sojourned for some time after the Flight into Egypt. On that site a fountain arose, it is said, in answer to Our Lady's prayers, and to-day a fitting grotto covers the hallowed well, which is under the care of the Holy Family College at Cairo. How many a fervent petition must go up from that shrine during these days of deep distress for the Catholic Missions in Syria, which have suffered, perhaps, more acutely than all others, as far as the destructive effects of the war are concerned.

Yes, these are terrible days for our Catholic Missionaries in Syria—how terrible, only those on the spot can tell! And we would beg all our readers who cherish this devotion to Our Lady of Lourdes, of all others just now nearest to our sad hearts, to proffer prayer for those priests and sisters who have been driven forth by their Moslem persecutors to starve, their churches and schools closed, or, grimmest irony of all—turned into Turkish colleges and institutions! Her French priests—and there were so many—called to the Front: her Sisters' schools and orphanages broken up, all Catholic works of mercy arrested, and in many cases ruthlessly destroyed—the Church in Syria has need of her Lourdes shrines at an hour like the present.

With what reason have we not to-day in the Near, as in the Far East, to re-echo the sweet antiphons of Lourdes to her who is the Mother of Healing and the Consoler of the Afflicted. Pray for us, Our Lady of Lourdes: *Monstra te esse Matrem!*

M. A. V.

Friendship.

"His presence wins me to repose."—Lionel Johnson.

HE came like an unexpected miracle when all else would have failed." So said one to me, one who had suffered much. She told me that when life seemed rooted up and trouble alone remained, when the foundations of trust and confidence had been dug up and found rotten at the core, when the secret avenues of heart and soul with her fellow-creatures seemed blocked with spying malice, this friend had come, straight from God, with the soul of a saint and the heart of a man, to stand by and protest, to re-create her belief in loyalty, to prepare the quietude of soul once again and make possible the sanctities of life.

She thought the advent of this friend fortuitous: but the years had been slowly weaving the pattern of her life for him, and now the web had reached those little threads meant for him to weave.

You remember the line in Emerson's wonderful essay on Friendship, where he says: "We snatch at the slowest fruit in the garden of God, which many summers and winters must ripen." He means we take the fruit as though only yesterday it began to grow, and so with this supreme gift of a friend of one day, we find that he has been coming steadily onward to us "down the arches of the years," only to meet us when God "saw it was very good."

One day I came across a poem by Lionel Johnson, the classic of Winchester and Oxford, the poet of whom Louise Imogen Guiney, in her beautiful little tribute, tells us that "the Catholic Church could command his whole zeal and furtherance," that "his Faith was his treasure and an abiding peace . . . the delicacy, nay the sanctity of his character was the outcome of it." The poem is called "A Friend," and the idea being so beautiful, I must quote it entire:

His are the whitenesses of soul
That Virgil had: he walks the earth
A classic saint in self-control,
And comeliness, and quiet mirth.

His presence wins me to repose;
When he is with me I forget
All heaviness; and when he goes,
The comfort of the sun is set.

But in the lonely hours I learn
How I can serve and thank him best:
God trouble him . . . that he may turn
Through sorrow to the only rest.

"His presence wins me to repose"—that contains the very essence of friendship and expresses the sense of rest ensuing from the fulfilment of one's desires in that friend, and one's confidence in his whole-hearted loyalty under all circumstances and with all people, whether you are present or absent. That sense of reliance so full and entire on his adamant stands for you . . . how seldom one finds this possibility of trust, this freedom from hateful vacillation and fear of intervening interests. How infinitely comforting it is to find that your friend is one for always, for all occasions, under all trials. . . .

Have you ever felt that on the departure of a friend "the comfort of the sun is set?" It is a wonderful expression of the poet and is a sequence to "When he is with me I forget all heaviness." We all know that dull, heavy feeling when the sun is behind the clouds and the glowing warmth is absent. This piercing the clouds by the sun is the warm presence of our friend and his departure is the setting.

The departure of all heaviness, the absence of all weight, when your friend is present, has untold depths of meaning for us. The dull heaviness of brain, the great weight of responsibility, the smouldering desire of a congenial touch, the mists of impeded vision of the dear one—all "leave me" "when he is with me."

"His presence wins me to repose." For the time he is with me "the comfort of the sun" is there—the light to see life, the warmth to bear its chills.

Cicero has said: "They seem to take away the sun from the world who withdraw friendship from life" . . . and without it, indeed, life would be hardly bearable. A friend seems to lead you aside and out of all the sad coldness take you to his heart and with the silent assurances of past trust not misplaced, beg you once more to renew your confidence and leave all to him. To me a friend is closer than blood—closer than our own kin. Euripedes says:

A friend

Welded into our life is more to us,

Than twice five thousand kinsmen,

One in blood.

. . . for him we feel that freedom from the claims of ties—we know it is his spontaneous love for us that prompts his kindness—his interest in us; there is no obligation feigned or straining at his generosity for us. There is a foreign proverb: "He can live without a brother, but not without a friend."

I think there is nothing so terrible in its revelation as the discovery of lesser depths of sincerity in one to whom we give our friendship, that he or she does not look on that sacred tie in the same light—and this whilst we have thought that the same depths lay in our friend's love for us, the same high views of the greatness of friendship's worth. Perhaps we have poured out our heart's sincerity—with both hands

taken her into confidence—only to find the return has been a superficial view of the whole, holy relation, a worthless measuring of the meaning and weight of our gift.

Revelations of small treacheries, of broken confidences, of little ridicules, of petty jealousies. Oh! the heinous discovery it is—how nauseous—how uprooting!

Someone has said that friendship cannot be all on one side. At first sight one might be tempted to dispute this, but once tried the certain impossibility of continuance of such unreciprocated sincerity, would be driven home. The doubts confirmed, the suspicions verified, all would militate against real friendship—there would always be the bitter barrier between the two, the iron-proof door of fear on the one side and cheerless indifference on the other. How many a relation has been maintained thus for a time by the one desiring the other's love—renewed after the bitter heartbreaking of discovery of insincerity and cooling love—mended so often, snapped again. Once the deep friendship is broken it is far better to cease community of feeling in any way, far better to keep apart and never try to tie up the knot again.

The tie of friendship is too sacred for aught but a perpetual seal.

Among the wonderful examples of friendship in history is that of Alcestis for her husband Admetus, the story of which in "Balaustion's Adventure" is so supremely well rendered by Browning. After Alcestis has given her life instead of Admetus, and in her turn has been restored to him, "the lost eyes opened"—Browning, in his own grandly simple style, sums up their after days:

So, the two lived together long and well.

The friendship between husband and wife is the most beautiful one on earth—for

He said, "She shall be my friend!

Side by side let us stand,

For I need your help and you.

Comrades true and true,

With my hand in your dear hand

We will see life out to the end."

Do you know this poem by Thomas O'Meara? Its end is perfect:—

And she turned and her eyes met his; and I think she cried (But she laughed through her tears) and she came to her place by his side.

There is no friendship without self-sacrifice—we feel this impetus to do something for our friend—to give him of our best, to spend ourselves, our health, our time, nay, if need be, give our very life to help or ease or save him. The pathos of Dryden's words expresses more than any poet this desire of dying:

He loved me well; so well he could but die

To show he loved me better than his life;

He lost it for me.

Monsignor Benson calls friendship the "mysterious thing," and further says, "It is as mighty as it is mysterious." How true it is—this mystery, this power. Wonder-working in its superhuman desire to spend itself, in spite of all obstacles, to all appearances not to be overcome—in spite of all suffering on our part, in spite of the whispers of jealous Nemesis who says we shall suffer in the end. Unheeding, we go forward and surmount all, recking nothing, with the eyes of our soul fixed on the needs of our friend, with the beats of our heart panting for him . . . every other thought brushed aside, every other care buried under the very passion of our clinging love.

The world is full of the loveliest stories of the power of a friend over man and woman—of its beauty and its sanctity, of its power for good and uprooting of evil pursuits—of its unending suffering for another's relief. Faces blanched with sick-bed watching pass us daily, faces we know might be health-tanned, were it not for one little room in the city streets—where hour by hour, day by day, the hidden mystic tie is binding their life to one tossing in the sigh for sleep.

There are friends in the pursuit of culture, friends in the paths of sanctity, friends in the succour of others, friends in the days of darkness, friends in the joys of light, friends in the strain of poverty, friends in the pleasure of wealth—but that which really makes a friend, tries and proves one, is the everyday suffering of irksome trials, the small crosses of life, the countless worries of the daily round—the constant occasions of tests of patience, of loyal upholding, of prudent restraint. If two remain friends through this, they are friends indeed.

In speaking of constant agreement between two friends, Emerson says: "Better be a nettle than an echo;" and no truer word was ever spoken, for what is more contemptible than a person agreeing with another in fawning imitation? It is lowering to human nature, and thriftless in the use of faculties which are God-given. Such echo leads to contempt, not to the cement of friendship.

There is a beauty in the friendship of old age—the durability of years of trial, when the confidences exchanged, when the secrets deposited half a century ago, remain untouched to the end. There is a grandeur in this which is absent from the heyday of love and trust in youth. Memory and sweet experience have blended the years, and away, in sweet lavender of past history, lay all the facts of their lives, shared by each in thought if not in deed. You will find that one great seal of their lasting relation was, what Coventry Patmore so wisely urges, "respect your friend." He says, "Keep your undrest, familiar style for strangers, but respect your friend."

This mystic of our modern times, this poet so deeply acquainted with the ways of loves of men, saw deeply into

human nature when he uttered those words. That is the cause of the unbroken friendship between the Celtic race and their priests, the respect, universal, constant, loving and great of the people for their priests, who have been their friends through the long sad years, through the glorious days of their history, through the present day of their beautiful country. Why the love of the priests has been sown in the rich, deep respect and esteem of those countless souls, for their dear soggarth, whose secrets he holds in his hands, whose sufferings he takes as his own, whose joys he feels with them. Those who go to Ireland feel their heart swell with joy at the beauty of the relationship, at the profound reverence and respect as you pass down the street and see the eager look of gratitude when "your reverince" gives them a kind word. Visit the country villages and hear the sincerity of their grateful welcome to the friend of their earthly life, closely knit to them by respect and pastoral love.

And now, when we think over the sweets of friendship—all its powers and helps—what strikes us most as proving its worth? Above all, I rank the possibility of silence reigning when two meet. Silence, the beautiful gift of God—the resting place of sanctity, the peace of the tired mind; silence, without let or hindrance, can reign, remaining not only unquestioned, but loved and curtained by friendship.

When this can happen, then God is there.

EDITH PEARSON.

The Victory.

"Ne sibi sapiens esse videatur."

I.

Last eve a mortal sin drew near to me,
And kindled in my breast an evil flame—
So I had well nigh left my fealty
And followed in the pointed path of shame.

II.

When he, the seraph, to whose guardian grace
The Father did this soul and flesh assign,
Between me and the tempter took his place,
And set his burning eager eyes on mine.

III.

He urged the pleas that had prevailed before,
And, by God's help, might well prevail again—
He spoke of joys that would be mine no more
If this I did . . . and spoke of them in vain.

IV.

He pointed to the Cross upon the wall—
"Behold the bleeding of His wounds renewed!
Dost thou not hear His sad reproachful call?"
I heard It. But my pride was unsubdued.

V.

He whispered: "Cast thyself before the Rood!
The saints have conquered by humility!"
But I, no saint, the humbling thought withstood,
And closer yet the demon pressed to me.

VI.

He reasoned of the price that must be paid—
"Disaster swift, or bitter treadmill years!"—
But pride, of both, had made me unafraid.
I bade him cease his pleading and his tears.

VII.

Then he (being pledged to make me penitent)
Stooped . . . seized the weapon that his arts defied . . .
And straightway through my daunted soul there went
The sneering, scathing protest—of my pride.

VIII.

"This deed thy lofty birthright strangely mars!
This scheme but poorly fits thy dignity,
O offspring of the God that made the stars,
Blood-brother unto Him that died for thee!"

G. M. HORT.



The Highway of the Cross.

IX. THE ATRIUM OF ANTONIA.

NO details of our Lord's scourging have been given us. It has been left to devout thought to gather its mysteries of pain and love. We must therefore suppose that all was done as was customary. The hands of the condemned were tied to a ring on the top of a short pillar, fixed on a stone socket and about two-and-a-half feet high. Thus the body was bent, and the rounded back and shoulders presented to the striker, who stood on a stone close by. The executioners stripped the victim and threw over his face a veil to hide its agony and stifle his cries. If lictors were present, one undid his fasces and used the rods. If not, a soldier or slave inflicted the punishment with the flagellum, a four-thonged lash whose ends were armed with knobs of metal or bone, and the fineness of whose fibres cut and tore the flesh. The form of the sentence was: "Go, lictor, bind his hands, cover his head, and strike carefully and vigorously." The pillar was usually close beside the magisterial Bema, or Tribune, and the punishment inflicted in public.

Pilate was not present at the scourging, nor at its conclusion did he immediately re-appear. This gave occasion to that scene of cruel mockery, the "crowning with thorns." The soldiers took our Lord from the Lithostrotos into the Atrium, "the hall of the Governor's palace," and called to their comrades, some five or six hundred, about the place to come and, as we should say, see the fun. Living among the Jews, they knew how the idea of kingship was in the air, of a prince who would rise of their race and in their land to make them again a free and strong nation. They knew that many had looked for the realisation of this in the prophet of Nazareth. Herod had mocked these expectations with the

shining robe—they also would show what they thought of the “King of the Jews.”

Royal robes were in those days of far richer material, more elaborate ornament, more richly jewelled, than in ours; we read of them as presents from monarch to monarch, heirlooms of dynasties, and booty in the sack of palaces. So with “the King of the Jews”: over His tunic, now clinging to His cut and bleeding body, for royal mantle of coronation, they throw a chlamys, the short, dark-red cloak of a soldier, worn over his armour, and fasten the ends on His right shoulder, as generals and emperors did the ampler “paludamentum.”

The thrones of oriental kings were of the highest art, and most costly decoration: the throne of derision is a stump, or butt end of a stone pillar, rolled towards the centre of the hall.

In the East the mitre, or crown, was the symbol of majesty, whether of kingship or high-priesthood. It was a high head-dress covered with plates of gold, and sometimes brilliant with precious stones. For “the King of the Jews,” the soldiers weave a cap or helmet of branches of the rhamnus, a shrub bearing thorns strong and sharply pointed, which appear two together, one straight and one twisted, and this they bind to His head with a circle of rushes: both plants common in Judea and doubtless found in the gardens of Antonia.

The king’s sceptre was the symbol of his power. When his Jewish queen, Esther, came unbidden into his presence, hiding “a mind full of anguish and exceeding great fear,” “with a rosy colour in her face and with gracious and bright eyes,” and when “God changed the king’s spirit into mildness,” Assuerus told her to come near and touch his sceptre; and when she still feared to approach, “he took the golden sceptre and laid it upon her neck and kissed her,” in token that love spread his power as a protecting wing round her and her people. That sceptre was of gold, richly wrought, solid and strong, now light and hollow and bending is the reed that the manacled hands try to hold; how thin and white and trembling the hands that take, and the fingers that close upon, the sceptre of derision!

They proffer homage. Some bow the knee before Him, and salute Him with mock reverence, “Hail! King of the Jews.” With bent knee, outstretched and clasped hands and bowed head, they are His courtiers. Some strike His face, and others spit upon it. Some snatch the reed from His hand and strike His head with it. The hall is filled with soldiers and at times their laughter grows loud and with shouts of encouragement are mingled suggestions for fresh insult.

This cruel horse-play of the soldiery had exceeded the orders of Pilate, but when he re-appeared he noted at once how it might further his scheme for release. Passing into the Lithostrotos and motioning for our Lord to be conducted there after him, he caused Him to be set on some conspicuous

position before the people, and pointing to Him said: “Behold the Man.” He thought that the sight of the exhausted, cut, and bleeding body, sustaining now most pitifully the mock royalty, would touch their hearts to some compassion. And they were silent, for the moment awed. But the Sanhedrists and their following raised again the cry for crucifixion. Pilate, in anger, retorted: “Take Him you, and crucify Him, for I find no cause in Him.” No permission this, but scorn flung at them. Therefore they return to the attack in the name of their law, “We have a law, and according to the law, He ought to die because He made Himself the Son of God.” Then Pilate “feared the more.” A ray of light was struggling through his darkness. The hidden strength that held together that wrecked manhood, and the calmness and patience that it breathed arrested him. His pagan education had left a dim belief that gods and sons of gods had in old times appeared in this world and interfered in the affairs of men. Perhaps he was in the presence of one now. He was sufficiently acquainted with the religion of the Jews to know that it taught them to expect, even now, a prince of the royal lineage of David who would free them from the yoke of Rome and make their holy city the capital of a great empire. Might not this man be he, and some manifestation of more than earthly power at any moment show itself?

He therefore again took our Lord aside, into the hall, and carefully, yet reverently, interrogated Him, not as before what He had done, but who He was, and whence He was. He would act according to the answer; but no answer came. “Speakest thou not to me,” he continued; “knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and I have power to release thee?” A low, sweet voice made reply: “Thou shouldst have no power against me, unless it were given thee from above. Therefore he that hath delivered me to thee hath the greater sin.”

Whatever further light dawned upon his awkward sense of a higher power, strengthened yet more Pilate’s desire and effort to release. So he was returning to the tribunal when a new cry assailed him. He had not seemed to attach much importance to the offence to their religion, the accusation of blasphemy, on account of which they demanded death, so in the interval the enemies of our Lord changed their attack and put into the mouths of the people another cry which contained a personal and most dangerous threat. “If thou release this man, thou art not Cæsar’s friend. For whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Cæsar.” As early in the day at the outset of the contest he had caught the word “Galilee,” and it had brought hope, so now he caught the word “Cæsar” and it struck him with fear. The Emperor Tiberius was grown morose and suspicious. Pilate was ambitious, and who can say what day dreams his ambition had brought. Perhaps, if all went well, he might become Pro-Consul of Syria, and living in a most regal opulence at Antioch, rule with almost regal power the neighbouring nations. But his

position was insecure. If he were accused, before the Emperor, of having tolerated an incipient rebellion, of having had the false prophet, and would-be King of Judea, delivered to him for punishment, and had set him free, such an accusation would be proved, would amount to high-treason, and would mean utter ruin, exile or imprisonment, perhaps death. He had done his best to release this prophet from Galilee, he could do no more without ruin to himself. After all it would not much matter if one innocent man did lose his life, a Jew of obscure birth, small following, and short career. At Rome the record would attract little notice, and for himself—well, the sunlit waves of life's tide would erase any unpleasant memory. On the other hand, the sense of defeat, his humiliation before the soldiers and their officers, the sting of his conscience made him thoroughly angry. Ascending again the tribune, and causing our Lord to mount some steps that He might be clearly seen, he pointed to Him, all his anger with their leaders, and his scorn for the crowd shown in his words, "Behold your King." They felt the insult, and retorted, "We have no king but Cæsar." Then the storm rose higher and surged more fiercely round him. It is calculated that there were now from two to three thousand men gathered at the Lithostrotos, and overflowing into its precincts and approaches. The friends and servants of the Sanhedrin inciting those round them, the lowest of the city population always ready for riot, ill-favoured and ill-fortuned strangers following in the wake of the multitude of pilgrims, now suborned, excited, frenzied, not to be baffled of their prey. With loud cries they protested their loyalty to Cæsar, with fierce menace they threatened Pilate. It was a hurricane of human passion, and as a hurricane it shook and mastered Pilate's weak soul, drowned the voices of mercy and justice, and shattered all his purpose.

There was now but one degree lower to fall, and he fell.

To the Victim, "Ibis ad crucem" (Thou shalt go to the cross).

To the officer, "I, lictor, expedi crucem" (Go, lictor, prepare the cross).

PLACID WAREING, C.P.

Some Johnsonian Wisdom.

SOME critics have almost blamed Boswell for his famous biography, on the plea that it was responsible for a lack of interest in the works of Johnson, but even the most censorious would scarcely pretend that they could realise with equanimity the absence of the widely read "Life." Johnson was, pre-eminently, a conversationalist, and we have it on the authority of a noted *litterateur* that his disputant skill was allowed room for development by the conferring on him of the "beggarly £300 a year of public money." Boswell, seemingly, was a believer in the theory that necessity is the mother of industry, for—writing of the Dictionary—he says: "No royal or noble patron extended a munificent hand to give independence to the man who had conferred stability of the language of his country. We may feel indignant that there should have been such unworthy neglect; but we must, at the same time, congratulate ourselves when we consider that to this very neglect, operating to rouse the natural indolence of his constitution, we owe many valuable productions which otherwise perhaps might never have appeared."

Another mentor, referring to the State pension conferred on Johnson, states: "Never before did . . . public money yield such a harvest for the public good. Not only did it keep the Doctor himself in brown suits and bob-wigs, and provide a home for Mrs. Williams, and for Mrs. Desmoulins, and for Miss Carmichael, and for Mr. Levett, but it has kept us all going ever since. This blessed pension gave Johnson ease and leisure—ease of mind and leisure to talk."

That the Doctor excelled as a talker, this same admirer ably bears witness. Whenever he was "stirred by contact with his friends, and inflamed by the passion for contradiction, or justly irritated by the flimsy platitudes of fools, he had ready for immediate use the quickest wit and the most magnificent vocabulary ever placed at the disposal of man." He had the knack of fitting the right word into the right place, which, when all is said and done, is the whole art of the speaker or writer.

His biographer records that he had "a respect for *the old religion*," and that on one occasion he declared: "A man who is converted from Protestantism to Popery may be sincere: he parts with nothing; he is only superadding to what he already had. But a convert from Popery to Protestantism gives up so much of what he has held as sacred as anything that he retains; there is so much *laceration of mind* in such a conversion, that it can hardly be sincere and lasting." Though Catholics can see the flaws in that view, they can also acknowledge that it displays a somewhat shrewd guess in the direction of one fundamental truth. Speaking of the fear of death, he thus expressed himself: "The better a man

is, the more afraid is he of death, having a clearer view of infinite purity." And, on the same subject: "What man," he asked a friend, after pointing out that the Scriptural statement as to the righteous having hope in death meant that they shall not have despair, "what man can say that his obedience has been such as he would approve of in another, or even in himself upon close examination, or that his repentance has not been such as to require being repented of? No man can be sure that his obedience and repentance will obtain salvation."

Johnson held the belief that "there is but one solid basis of happiness; and that is, the reasonable hope of a happy futurity." Once he had an argument with a friend who held that it was most surprising that sickness and the fear of death did not make many more men religious, and thus concluded it: "Sir, a man who has never had religion before no more grows religious when he is sick than a man who has never learned figures can count just when he has need of calculation." He once defined the difference between physical and moral truth: "Physical truth is when you tell a thing as it actually is. Moral truth is when you tell a thing sincerely and precisely as it appears to you. I say such a one walked across the street; if he really did so I told a physical truth. If I thought so, though I should have been mistaken, I told a moral truth." Another of his statements was to the effect that there was so much falsehood in the world just because people were in reality careless about truth, and not because they were addicted to intentional lying.

In a discussion with Sir Joshua Reynolds on drinking, the point was once raised that it was sometimes difficult for a person to refuse to drink with his host in case that latter was fond of the bottle. "Sir," remarked Johnson, "there is no more reason for your drinking with *him* than for his being sober with *you*." But of course he liked to take the opposite view to that of his opponent, and once ridiculed claret as a drink in which "a man would be drowned before it made him drunk."

In a discussion with Boswell on preaching, Dr. Johnson gave his opinions of certain means of reaching certain goals: "To insist against drunkenness as a crime because it debases reason, the noblest faculty of man, would be of no service to the common people: but to tell them that they may die in a fit of drunkenness, and show them how dreadful that would be cannot fail to make a deep impression."

Nowadays, it is generally believed that not only do many flippant reviewers not read the volumes which they set themselves out to criticise, but that some of the giants of literature do not even trouble themselves to read the volumes to which they write glowing 'Introductions.' That the latter is by no means a peculiarly modern form of surprise, Johnson disclosed in a reply to a query as to whether he knew much of Rolt—for whose Dictionary of Trade and Commerce he had written a preface. "Sir," he answered, "I never saw

the man and never read the book. The booksellers wanted a Preface to a Dictionary of Trade and Commerce. I knew very well what a Dictionary should be, and I wrote a Preface accordingly." Of a nagging critic he said: "A fly, sir, may sting a stately horse and make him wince; but the one is but an insect and the other is a horse still."

The following is a quotation from a letter written by the Sage to Mr. Joseph Baretti, at Milan. Its worldly wisdom seems so apparent after we have read it, and yet how it sets one thinking when a little consideration is given to the endings of ninety-five per cent. of our novels! "In love, as in every other passion of which hope is the essence, we ought always to remember the uncertainty of events. There is, indeed, nothing that so much seduces reason from vigilance as the thought of passing life with an amiable woman; and if all would happen that a lover fancies, I know not what other terrestrial happiness would deserve pursuit. But love and marriage are different states. Those who are to suffer the evils of life together and who suffer often for the sake of one another, soon lose that tenderness of look, and that benevolence of mind, which arose from the participation of unmingled pleasure and successive amusement. A woman, we are sure, will not be always fair, and man cannot retain through life that respect and assiduity by which he pleases for a day or for a month." And yet, the Doctor's love was of the rather worldly and selfish species—one must not forget the higher type which mutual trials but serve to sweeten.

"A man," commented our philosopher, "by taking a second wife, pays the highest compliment to the first, by showing that she made him so happy as a married man that he wishes to be so a second time." Regarding a gentleman who had been very unhappy in marriage, and who married again immediately after his first wife died, Johnson said he was an exemplification of the triumph of hope over experience.

Speaking of Churchill's poetry, he thus delivered himself: "To be sure he is a tree that cannot produce good fruit; he only bears crabs. But, sir, a tree that produces a great many crabs is better than a tree which produces only a few." And of Dr. John Ogilvie's poems: "Why, sir, there is in them what *was* imagination, but it is no more imagination in *him* than sound is sound in the echo."

On his biographer expressing his fear that he might carry the craze for trifles in his diary too far, he commented: "There is nothing, sir, too little for so little a creature as man."

This comment might very well apply to one of the chief designs of present-day socialists: "Sir, your levellers wish to level *down* as far as themselves; but they cannot bear levelling *up* to themselves. They would all have some people under them; why not have some people above them?"

Of a certain person, one of whose traits was not that of hiding his light under a bushel, he declared: "Sir, he is

one of the many who have made themselves *public*, without making themselves *known*." He held the view that there were many individuals who were so much men of the world as to be nothing in the world, and a great many others who were so much of everything as to be nothing of anything. Of a lady preacher he said: "Sir, a woman's preaching is like a dog's walking on his hind legs. It is not done well; but you are surprised to find it done at all."

In a debate when someone suggested that lawyers were likely to carry their professional efforts at dissimulation into the affairs of every-day life, the Doctor maintained that as lawyers were paid for affecting warmth for their clients they could not be expected to maintain a judicial manner even in face of the evidence, continuing: "Sir, a man will no more carry the artifice of the bar into the common intercourse of society, than a man who is paid for tumbling upon his hands will continue to tumble upon his hands when he should walk on his feet."

He seemed to have had a positive aversion to pretentious authors, and on one occasion when somebody wished to introduce him to one of that ilk, replied: "No, sir, I never desire to converse with a man who has written more than he has read." This was in reference to opulent, retired traders: "Sir, they have lost the civility of tradesmen, without acquiring the manners of gentlemen." Speaking in connection with a case where Boswell was to defend a teacher who was being prosecuted for severely chastising an unruly youngster, he pointed out: "Till you can fix the degree of obstinacy and negligence of the scholars, you cannot fix the degree of severity of the master."

In 1772, six Methodist students were expelled from Oxford for the reason that they would not desist from the practice of public exhortation and prayer, and Johnson thus commented on the incident: "I believe they might be good beings; but they were not fit for the University of Oxford. A cow is a very good animal in a field; but we turn her out of the garden."

He got at the kernel of the reason why some people otherwise sensible do not by any means show dislike to flattery when he said: "Flattery pleases very generally. In the first place the flatterer may think what he says to be true: but in the second place whether he thinks so or not, he certainly thinks those whom he flatters of consequence enough to be flattered."

He did not hold with a friend who praised the free-and-easy way in which the ancient philosophers carried on their wordy disputes: "Being angry with one who controverts an opinion which you value, is a necessary consequence of the uneasiness which you feel. Every man who attacks my beliefs diminishes in some degree my confidence in them, and therefore makes me uneasy."

Garrick was once mentioning the desire of a mutual friend to publish a book and of the efforts of a brother-in-law of the would-be publishing one to stop the event by means of money compensation. "What!" superciliously commented the great actor, "is Strahan a good judge of an epigram?"

"Why, sir, he may not be a judge of an epigram; but you see he is a judge of what is *not* an epigram."

I shall conclude with a Johnsonian definition of a pleasant talk: "The happiest conversation is that of which nothing is distinctly remembered but a general effect of pleasing impression." And, yet, but for the fact that Boswell remembered a good deal more of his 'subject's' conversation than is here indicated, the literature of the world would have been distinctly poorer in a very pleasant direction.

THOMAS KELLY.

fáilte na noúlaḡ.

(The Bog Woman's Welcome to God and Mary.)

Silence, cold and gathering night
O'er the lonesome bogland fall
Seagulls homeward take their flight,
Filibeen and curlew call.

Hidden in the thatch the wren
Sleeps. The field-beasts in the stall
Mild and soft-eyed breathe, as when
They warmed his cot—the Lord of all.

Rake the greesha round the sod,
Put the candle at the pane,
For fear the maiden mother should
Seek a welcoming in vain.

Ochóne, a Mhuire dhil! thou who,
Holy one, didst mourn and sigh,
Ochóne! that doors were closed unto
God and Mary passing by!

(Whist, avic, be in thy sleeping
Shóhéen shô, grádh geal mo croidhe
Maybe ere the day be peeping
Iosagán will smile at thee.

Be still, avic, mo ghile bán,
Christ this night was born on earth,
Maybe ere the pearl of dawn
He will lie beside our hearth.

A Mhuire deelish! should'st thou wander
Weary to my cabin door,
All my blessings I would squander
On thee, all my love, my store.

My flax, my down, my share of wool,
Sweet Virgin, to thee for thy wearing,
My meal, my wine a meadherful,
My honey to thee for thy cheering!

A thousand welcomes would there be
Before thee, Mary, and thy Son,
A thousand blessings be on ye
This night and till the world be done.

EMILY DOWLING.

Bell-Lore.

THE association of bells with religious ceremonies is an extremely ancient one.

It existed in the Jewish Tabernacle, where the bells attached to the High Priest's robes served to inform the worshippers of his movements in the sanctuary, and enabled them to follow the rites they could not see; and in ancient Egypt, where the greater festivals of the gods were heralded by the ringing of bells. A natural instinct early perceived the fitness of giving a voice to the sacred hours, and of fixing them in the memory by some arresting sound, such as the resonant clash of metal on metal; and the comparatively late introduction of bells into Christian worship is only explainable by the position of the early Church—by the persecution that forced her to celebrate her rites in secrecy and silence and to send out her summons to fast or festival by a whispered word or a cryptic sign.

The message of bells is, before all else, a message of gladness. In later periods the hallowed chimes associated themselves with melancholy rites and sad necessities—with the formulæ of excommunication; the approach of national peril; and the lamentation for the dead. But such things are alien from their true character; and the secret of the charm they have exercised over both the wildest and the dullest natures lies in their power of suggesting the joy and hope of holy things; the eternal tranquillity and concord that exist above the storms and mists of earth.

Even the Passing Bell has its own happy symbolism. It is not only a call to pray for the dying, but is also intended to represent the upward flight of the departing soul. And the harsh note of the detested Curfew inspired, in England, the institution of the Angelus! It would seem as if the connection of unrelieved sadness or severity with the voice of bells were intolerable to human imagination.

It was natural that things so inseparably linked with the service of God, so closely associated with the supernatural, should come to be looked on as having a hallowed character of their own, and even as being miraculously gifted.

The early bell-lore of Ireland and Wales is instinct with this idea; and, in the case of the small hand-bells used by ecclesiastics for rubrical purposes a halo of reverent awe surrounded those that had been in the possession of men of holy life. Each bore the name of its saintly owner, and was believed to possess an influence resembling his. For instance, the Bell of St. Kenan was endowed with the power of communicating God's will. Its voice was one of good counsel and guidance in perplexity; and it played a decisive part in the Saint's life, as appears in the following legend.

Kenan, a native of Connacht, had journeyed to Wales to become the disciple of the Welsh Abbot, St. Gildas, whose repute for piety was great, and with whom Kenan dwelt for some time, in all humility.

But, gradually, the thought that God called him to more independent and more lonely labours grew upon the Irishman's mind; and, while he still debated where to turn his steps, he had a vision that decided him, wherein a voice from heaven spoke:—"A bell shall guide thee to the destined place. There thou shalt build a house of monks."

Waking, he told the message to Gildas; and asked the saintly Abbot to provide him with a bell; feeling, no doubt, that one already dedicated to the sanctuary would be the most suitable for the purpose, and that the vision must have signified such a one.

But no sanctuary-bell could be spared from the service of the Abbey; or, at least, the brethren seem to have declared their unwillingness to part with one.

So Abbot Gildas took a scrap of metal, and, through the power of God, and the sanctity that gave strength to his efforts, fashioned it into a well-cast bell; and Kenan took it, and set forth in faith.

He journeyed far and long, without any warning to stay his steps. He had crossed an arm of the sea, and passed into Welsh Wales, or Cornwall, when, in a well-wooded valley, the bell at last gave forth its sound, ringing of its own accord in the hand of him who bore it. So Kenan knew he had found the place of his rest; and he fared no further, but, with the like-minded men he had drawn to him began at once to build cells and to till the soil. It was in the fertile valley of the Fal—the river that gives its name to the modern town of Falmouth—that his monastery was founded, and the fame of his holiness and that of his master, St. Gildas, lived on in the story of the divinely-gifted bell.

Again, there is the golden bell of St. Odoacer, long preserved in the church of Llandaff, and said to possess a mystical power of blessing.

St. Odoacer was Bishop of Llandaff, and reputed in his lifetime to have worked miracles. Tradition said that he had fashioned this golden bell—or cup; for in its later clapperless condition it seems to have been used as one—out of the golden-tinted button which, according to the custom of the country, some young maidens had been washing at a well, when the wearied saint passed by.

He pleaded for a cup of the well-water. "We have no cup save that which we hold in our hands!" And they laughingly showed him the butter.

The saint moulded it into the shape of a bell, drank gratefully, and passed on, with strength renewed, leaving a blessing on "the cup" that had refreshed him.

In after days his own ceremonial bell, preserved as a precious relic, became associated with this incident, and was

honoured as a cup that would confer a benediction on those who drank from it.

Early Irish art expressed the veneration in which such relics were held, in a very practical way. When the saint was gone to his rest, his bell seemed too sacred for the use of lesser men, and a special shrine of metal would be made to preserve it, and special guardians appointed to take care of it.

The elaborate beauty of these bell-shrines—of which the last-known example is the shrine of the Bell of St. Patrick, in the National Museum, Dublin—seems an odd contrast to the crude simplicity of the objects they contain. But no receptacle was thought too costly for these hallowed relics—the servitors alike of God and God's chosen. The reverence with which they were regarded gave rise to a peculiarly solemn attestation, known as "the bell oath." The vengeance of the saint to whom the bell had been sacred was thought to pursue those who swore falsely upon it; and many who would not have scrupled to perjure themselves under any other circumstances would tell the truth when confronted by the bell.

So it has happened again and again with the famous "Golden Bell of St. Senan."

Senan or Shenahan was Bishop of the ancient "Seven Churches of the Isle of Scattery." Only the ruins of these churches now remain; but the Bell has been the means in recent times, of discovering many a criminal secret.

It was of no use, either, to attempt to evade its judgment by losing it or casting it away. There is a story that it was once cast over a high cliff by a man who had stolen some linen, and who feared that the parish priest was going to ask him to swear his innocence—or, rather, to betray his guilt!—on the fatal "Golden Bell."

But when he arrived at the priest's house—behold!—the recovered Bell was there before him; and he fell on his knees, grotesqueness, but is, none the less, truth.

In mediæval England, also, a wealth of tradition surrounds bells. The peculiar fame of English church-chimes is largely owing to St. Dunstan, who was a skilled bell-caster and musician, and provided many English churches—particularly in his native West Country—with efficient and sweet-voiced peals.

Specially interesting is this connection of Dunstan with church-bells; for the music was said to inspire fiends with terror—the very power attributed to Dunstan himself in those familiar legends in which truth wears the disguise of a crude grotesqueness, but is, none the less, truth.

The ringing of church-bells was also thought to disperse thunder-clouds. One of the duties of the sacrist of Old St. Paul's was "the ringine of the hallowed belle in great tempests and lightnings;" and mediæval bells often bore the inscription, "Frango Fulgura"—"I break lightnings!"

In connection with this, the favourite dedication of, at least, one bell in the peal to St. Barbara has to be noted.

This virgin-saint was the daughter of a heathen nobleman, who himself denounced her to the authorities, but who, immediately after her martyrdom, was struck by lightning, and died miserably. A power of controlling thunderstorms came thus to be ascribed to Saint Barbara, and the aid of her prayers was invoked at the approach of tempest.

It may here be said that modern science rather tends to suggest some practical utility in the mediæval custom, on which it was once the fashion to pour much pitying ridicule.

The waves of air set up by bells do, in all probability, help to break up and scatter any heavy mass of cloud that comes within the reach of their vibrations.

Innumerable stories, both ancient and modern, tell of the mystic sympathy existing between bells and the human spirit.

The sound of the Passing Bell was thought to make itself heard beyond the reach of its actual vibrations.

The death of Hilda, Abbess of Whitby, was thus communicated to a distant convent; and the nuns, when the tidings were brought them in the ordinary course, were already praying for the dead, whose passing-bell, at the very hour of death, had been heard by a "clairaudient" member of their community.

The sound of chiming bells is also said to have announced the passing to God of the great and well-beloved Bishop Grosteste, or Greathead; while in the records of obscurer folk, it is pathetic to note the part played by this mystic sound, and its universal interpretation as a message of comfort. So far as this is concerned, we are many of us "clairaudients." We cherish, many of us, the secret memory of some far-off "lin-lan-lone," heard, as it were, across the long miles that separated us from the death-bed we longed to watch by; and symbolising, in some vague yet wholly satisfying way, the peaceful setting-forth of our beloved for the Land of which the voice of hallowed bells had so often reminded him!

For the sound of bells is one that always seems to reach us across the threshold of some higher consciousness. Wordless though it is, the power of association will always set words to it—

Come to thy God in time!
Thus saith the pealing chime.
Storm, billow, whirlwind past,
Come to thy God at last!

G. M. HORT.

Retribution.

BY GREGORY BARR.

CHAPTER I.

"Shall auld acquaintance be forgot?"

"WHAT can bring M. Delormes from his office at this early hour?" soliloquized the concierge as she sat knitting inside the glass door of her lodge.

M. Delormes, the object of this soliloquy, dismounted from a fiacre, entered the handsome porte-cochère and crossed the grass plot of a house situated between the Rue St. Honoré and the Champs Elysées: he wore a preoccupied air, quite unlike his usual cheery manner. In truth, M. Delormes was in a dilemma, he felt that he must either break a solemn promise or relinquish a most advantageous offer of marriage for his only daughter, Lucille.

A year had scarcely elapsed since he had promised his dying wife never to force their only child to marry against her will. To-day, M. Camille Legrange, the richest banker in Paris, had solicited the hand of Mdlle. Lucille for his only son and heir, Felix.

Now, M. Delormes frequently boasted that he had never broken a promise—yet, for various reasons, his heart was set on his daughter Lucille's marriage with Felix Legrange. It seemed rather foolish to be forced to acknowledge that he was not at liberty to dispose of the hand of his own daughter like a sensible Frenchman.

"The deuce!" he exclaimed, "I am placed between Scylla and Charybdis: I must work on the girl's vanity. The worst of the matter is, I fear her heart is set on marrying that beggarly bank clerk, Beauchamp, whom I myself seemed to favour: all that must now end. But here she comes."

"You want me, father?"

"Yes, mignonne, sit down until I have a little chat with you. You look charming to-day, little one; it is no wonder you bewitch the young men of Paris with those bright eyes; and, *ma foi*, that rose-bud at your girdle blushes because it does not equal the bloom of your cheeks."

"Flatterer, as a penalty for that speech, you must just wear the rosebud yourself." So saying, Lucille laughingly fastened the rosebud in her father's buttonhole.

"Thanks, love, it is not mere flowers but the richest jewels which should adorn my Lucille: she should have carriages and horses, her country mansion, her handsome town residence, and she should be surrounded by every luxury."

"I have no wish for all those fine things; I like to live at home, happy with my own loved father."

"Humph! and was it for your own father that you put on this pretty costume?"

Lucille blushed and laughed.

"Do you forget that Victor Beauchamp is to have a free day and has promised to come with us to the Charity Bazaar?"

"I do not consider that you require his escort, your aunt's company is quite sufficient." Lucille changed colour.

"But—"

"No buts if you please, I wish M. Victor's intimacy with you to cease."

Lucille gazed at her father in blank amazement. Until that moment she had believed that he favoured Victor's suit. What could have changed him thus suddenly? As if in answer to her thought her father said: "While you and Victor were children I had no objection to your intimacy, now that you are of an age to marry I do not approve of his visits here as I shall never allow my daughter to marry any man who has not an income of at least ten thousand francs; M. Beauchamp's income does not amount to one-fourth of that sum."

"Father! what has changed your sentiments with regard to Victor? You have often praised his devotedness to his invalid mother during her life and his upright, manly character. Remember that when I come of age I shall be in receipt of exactly the income you mention. Grandmother left it to me, and with it Victor and I could—"

"Do many things which I shall never allow. I will have no needy fortune-hunter seeking my daughter's hand for the sake of her money."

"For shame, father, to speak of Victor in that manner; he is *no* fortune-hunter; he is the very soul of honour," and Lucille's splendid, dark eyes blazed with anger.

"Tut, tut, child, be reasonable; I speak but for your good. With your beauty and accomplishments you could reign as a queen of Parisian society if you were only married to a suitable *parti*. Now I have received a most eligible offer for your hand, which the richest man in Paris solicits for his only son and heir."

He paused and fixed his eyes on Lucille to see the effect of his words: she became deadly pale, she felt as if an icy hand were laid on her heart. The richest man in Paris was the banker, M. Camille Legrange, a well-known atheist: his son, Felix, was already renowned, not merely for his diatribes against religion, but also for his wicked life. Surely her father could never wish her to marry such a man? She remained silent and her father continued.

"I have yet another objection to your marriage with M. Beauchamp. He is a weak, priest-ridden man; I detest a male *dévoté*. Religion does well enough for women, but—for men—bah!—we have got past that. There is no fear of this imbecility in the husband I have selected for you—Felix Legrange."

The girl's courage rose as her worst fears were realised, and she replied with dignity.

"You are right in one thing, father; there is indeed no fear that M. Felix Legrange will ever trouble himself about any code of religion, honour, or morality: *self* is his God."

"You are severe my daughter, such strong language is unsuitable: you judge Felix Legrange harshly, you do not know him."

"Not know him!—have not he, Victor and I known each other as children!—have I not seen his cowardly subterfuges to escape punishment by throwing the blame of his faults on Victor, who was innocent!"

"Chut, chut, little one, you must not rake up old grievances; that of which you complain is all past and should be forgotten. M. Felix Legrange, as a man, is quite different from what he was as a boy; and—and—in a word, his father has asked me the hand of my daughter for his son; I have given my consent to the marriage, the advantages of which I wish you to consider seriously."

"Rather would I be buried alive than marry Felix Legrange, a thousand times would I prefer it. Oh, father! father! say you will not force me to marry him." Lucille fell on her knees, clasping her father's hands.

"What nonsense you talk, child! One would think I wanted you to marry a beggar or a blind cripple instead of a young, handsome man, the most eligible *parti* in Paris. It is my business as your father to select a suitable husband for you. Why, before I had addressed six words to your deceased mother, our parents had arranged our marriage, which proved to be a very happy one."

"My mother was a saint, and as for you—I do not believe you could make anyone unhappy. Will you be less kind and good to your only child than you were to her mother?"

Poor Lucille's bitter tears coursed down her cheeks: her father was visibly affected. It is probable that he would have relented but for a pressing business transaction which necessitated his negotiating for an important loan from Legrange *père*.

"My word is passed, I have promised to favour Felix Legrange's suit to my utmost; therefore, I insist on your seeing him and allowing him to plead his own cause. He may call to-day, so going to the bazaar is out of the question. I also forbid you to give further encouragement to M. Victor Beauchamp; his visits here must cease."

So saying, M. Delormes gently withdrew his hands from Lucille's, and left the room.

CHAPTER II.

A Brave Man.

A numb feeling of misery and helplessness took possession of poor Lucille: that her father should wish her to marry such a man as Felix Legrange was incomprehensible to her. Money seemed to her a matter of little consequence when put in the

balance with the all-important qualities which should make a man be loved and respected by his wife. What happiness could be found in a home whence God was banished? Felix boasted of his atheism, whilst Victor was a model of every manly Christian virtue.

"If I may not marry Victor I shall *never* marry," she exclaimed.

"And who wants my *mignon*ne to marry just at present?" asked a cheerful voice, as Lucille's aunt kissed her lovingly.

"Mimi, mimi, my heart will break," sobbed Lucille.

"Nonsense, child, at your age hearts don't break. Sit down here and tell me what is troubling you."

And Madame Bunsen seated herself on a low ottoman, with her arms tenderly encircling Lucille. The whole story was poured forth while Mme. Bunsen listened attentively. She was a kind woman and she loved Lucille, whose marriage with Victor she would have favoured had his worldly prospects been brighter. But she was too much a woman of the world not to perceive that her brother was in pecuniary difficulties on account of unlucky speculations. Lucille's marriage with Felix Legrange would help to extricate that brother from his difficulties; so, like many another shrewd, worldly woman, she was inclined to prefer earthly advantages to spiritual ones: she therefore felt it her duty to defend her brother's course of action and to advise temporising.

"You see, Lucille, there is no need for an immediate decision; if you just allow Felix Legrange to visit occasionally you need not give him any definite answer for the present."

"Quite impossible! I loathe him, I could not tolerate his presence," exclaimed Lucille. At that moment a servant announced M. Victor Beauchamp. Whilst Lucille hastily dried her tears, Madame Bunsen hastened to meet Victor. She was shocked by his ghastly pallor and changed appearance. He seemed to have aged years since she had seen him one week previously.

"I have come to say farewell," he began, but seeing Lucille's red eyes he stopped.

"Has any sorrow come to Mdlle. Lucille?" he asked anxiously.

"Victor, call me Lucille as of old, but—what has happened to you?" as she noticed his haggard, worn look.

"Just this, that all my happiness is blighted, for I can now never realise the dream of my life; I can never ask you to be mine; I could not let you link your destiny with that of a ruined man. Yesterday I received notification of the failure of the bank in which I had invested the small legacy left me by my father. To-day, I was dismissed from my situation because I would not give up the practice of my religious duties."

"How noble—how grand! Victor, Victor, one *at least* shall ever be faithful to you"—commenced Lucille enthusiastically. She stopped suddenly—her father's prohibition recurring to her mind. Victor smiled sadly, was *she* too like all the world,

ready to gauge a man's worth by his gold? An awkward silence ensued.

"I know I shall offend against all the laws of the Medes and Persians as exemplified by Parisian custom if I leave you two young people alone. However, just for once, I will offend with an easy conscience," said Madame Bunsen as she tactfully withdrew, leaving the sorrow-stricken pair to mutual explanations, unembarrassed by the presence of a third party.

"I, too, have my sorrowful tale to tell, Victor, but I must first hear yours," said Lucille quietly.

He commenced: "Everyone knows the virulent hatred with which the government and its satellites pursue all who practise their religion. It is also well known that the strings of the government are pulled by the Jews and the Freemasons. As the head of the bank in which I was employed was both an atheist and a Freemason, it was a matter of surprise to many that I was left so long undisturbed in the practice of my religious duties. But—as the German proverb says: 'Aufgehoben ist nicht aufgehoben,'* and the blow, though delayed, was to be struck.

"About a month ago, our manager called me and after some complimentary words about what he was pleased to term my ability and integrity, he told me that our chief was thinking of offering me a post of great trust, bringing with it the salary of ten thousand francs a year—"

Here Lucille started.

"I commenced to thank him but he stopped me, saying that of course it would be necessary for the firm to be secure of my patriotism, that no one who put allegiance to a foreign sovereign before that which was due to his own government could be relied upon; he looked keenly at me. I at once understood him, but did not feel called upon to say more, than that I hoped always to prove myself a true patriot, and that I was ready to shed my blood in defence of my country were it necessary. 'Oh! no need for blood-shedding, only freedom from superstition,' he laughed as he left me.

"Since then I felt myself to be the subject of espionage. Whenever I left the church of St. Honoré I saw a man with a slouched hat who made off when I appeared. I knew I was watched.

"Last evening, the eve of the First Friday of the month, I went there to confession to Père Godard and told him my suspicions; he encouraged me to face the worst bravely, and did not conceal his fears that I would be sharply tried.

"On entering the bank this morning I was informed that the chief was waiting for me in his office. He received me courteously and said that, with my abilities for finance and administration, I might hope to attain a very high position if I did not deliberately block up the road to it. After having spoken for a while in this strain, he paused for me to reply, but I remained silent. He then mooted the business for which

* Forbearance is no acquittance.

he had sent for me and offered me the post concerning which the manager had spoken a month ago: the chief added, that this would only be the stepping-stone to much higher positions in the firm; but—on one condition only—I should cease the outward practice of my religion. ‘We do not interfere with the private belief of our employés, but we consider it imbecility for any man to conform exteriorly to the fooleries of the Roman Church, and we shall not keep anyone in our employment who does so,’ he added.

“‘Then,’ I replied, ‘I shall no longer intrude on your valuable time: whilst thanking you for the favour you wished to confer upon me, I must respectfully decline to accept it.’

“He stormed and raged for a while: finding me inflexible he dismissed me from my situation, warning me, that I would find it difficult, if not impossible, to obtain admission into any other bank in France after dismissal by him. And now, Lucille, what is your trouble?”

Lucille looked at him with proud, happy eyes.

“Your noble act is exactly what I would have expected from you.”

He made an impatient gesture: “But yourself, Lucille, you are in trouble, tell me all.”

“Before speaking of myself I wish to hear what you intend to do.”

“To emigrate. No Frenchman likes to leave his native country. I, however, have no choice. Perhaps in the New World I may be able to carve my way to fortune. This is only a hope and I would not wish my Lucille to waste her best years waiting for my return. May God give you a husband worthy of you.” His voice trembled, whilst a look of intense love leaped to Lucille’s beautiful eyes.

“Victor Beauchamp! if I may not marry you I shall *never* marry. Now for my tale.” Lucille related briefly what her father had said to her, only omitting his having commanded her to discourage Victor’s visits. “No need to tell him as he is about to leave France,” she thought. Victor was deeply shocked when he heard the name of the man selected by Lucille’s father as her future husband. She was firm in declaring that, though she would not disobey her father by marrying without his consent, neither would she commit perjury by promising at the altar of God to love any man except the one whom she really loved.

Here Mme. Bunsen’s cheery voice interrupted them with: “Well, I think I have left you young people long enough together.”

As Victor and Lucille advanced hand in hand to meet her, she was amazed at the look of calm strength their faces wore, such a look as is only given by suffering, accepted bravely and without complaint.

Victor soon took his leave. Having heard from Lucille the account of his noble constancy, Madame Bunsen clasped the young girl to her heart in a motherly embrace, and Lucille knew that Victor had gained a champion.

CHAPTER III.

The Serpent’s Trail.

“I presume that the gentleman who is now with Mdlle. Lucille visits here frequently?” queried Felix, in a nonchalant tone, as he applied a light to his cigar. The concierge counted the stitches of her knitting very carefully and did not pretend to hear him.

“Here, you young rascal, catch, get bon-bons with it,” as Felix tossed a five-franc piece to the three-year-old boy who was sprawling on the floor.

“Thanks, monsieur, I will keep it for him,” from the concierge. “Monsieur was asking?—oh! yes—this gentleman is very often here, sometimes sings in the evening with Ma’m’selle and her father. Oh! he is a fine man, but not rich like monsieur, cannot toss five-franc pieces to the garçon. He is tall, tall, twice as tall as monsieur.”

“D—— him,” muttered Felix, as the object of these remarks emerged from the house, crossed the courtyard and walked quickly past the porte-cochère. Had tact formed a portion of Legrange’s mental equipment, he would have recognised that this was an inopportune moment in which to offer himself and his millions to Lucille, but his intolerable vanity persuaded him that no girl in her senses would reject the advantages attached to an alliance with him. He verily believed that he would be able to return to his father and sum up the result of the forthcoming interview in Cæsar’s oft-quoted words, “Veni, vidi, vici.” But, alas! for the futility of reliance on feminine perversity!

He repaired to an adjacent café to fortify his courage by a glass of absinthe, and barely half an hour had elapsed since Victor’s departure before poor Lucille was called upon to receive her new suitor. On hearing his name announced, she at first refused to see him; it required all Mme. Bunsen’s influence to induce her to grant him any interview, as her father had commanded her to do. Nevertheless, she left him waiting a considerable time, “to knock the conceit out of him,” she said. He fumed and cursed inwardly at the delay, mentally resolving to pay her off for such treatment after their marriage, for not a doubt of his acceptance crossed his mind.

At last the door opened and Lucille entered, accompanied by her aunt. The young girl looked queenly in her beauty. She was very tall, slight and graceful, her black hair shone in massive coils; she was usually pale, but when her emotions were aroused her colour rose and her large, dark eyes flashed.

Madame Bunsen shook hands with Felix, whilst Lucille responded only by a distant bow. She remained standing and did not ask him to take a seat. This was not encouraging. In vain Mme. Bunsen made dumb signs to her. Finding this useless, her aunt said to Lucille: “Won’t you sit down, my dear, and you also, monsieur?”

"I prefer standing," replied Lucille coldly.

A fiendish look came into monsieur's eyes: at that moment he would willingly have strangled her. He said nevertheless with much urbanity, "I fear there has been some misunderstanding—evidently Mdlle. Lucille does not know that I come with the permission of her respected father to speak with her about a matter on which the happiness of my life depends. If Mademoiselle will only grant me a private interview——"

"I have no secrets from my aunt; Monsieur can speak freely in her presence."

This was an unpromising beginning: amazement and rage contended for the mastery in Legrange's breast. Controlling himself, however, he commenced a speech about his admiration of and love for his dear Mdlle. Lucille, whom he adored, whose very shadow he worshipped. He continued to speak for some time in this strain: he declared she would make him supremely happy if she would deign to accept the offer of his heart and hand. Lucille interrupted him with, "Enough, monsieur. In obedience to my father's wishes I have heard you thus far. I am aware of the honour you do me by offering me your hand, but I must beg to decline this honour."

He fell on his knees dramatically: entreating her not to take the sunshine from his life, not to darken his days—she stopped him in a voice of cold contempt, bade him seek elsewhere the golden orb which should illumine his days.

Legrange completely lost his temper: stung to frenzy by her hauteur, he asked her did she expect from a beggarly suitor, striving to earn a miserable subsistence as an ill-paid clerk, the luxury which would be the portion of *his* (Legrange's) wife, whose every earthly wish could be gratified as soon as formed?

"Monsieur Legrange, now that you plainly allude to M. Beauchamp, I beg to inform you that my unalterable conviction is, that M. Beauchamp's wife would be happier on bread and water than your wife would be with a hundred millions a year. I have the honour to bid you good morning." She left the room.

How he made his way to the street he did not know, he was choking with rage: that he, Felix Legrange, who was sought by all the mothers of marriageable daughters in Paris as the most eligible *parti* of the day—that *he* should be rejected by a chit of eighteen—it was intolerable—worse still, that *he* should be refused and that wretched Beauchamp be accepted!—(for Felix never doubted that Victor had been accepted)—a pauper—depending on his brain work for subsistence. It was unbearable! and he, Legrange would not submit to it. That confounded Beauchamp was the bane of his existence!—held up to him as a model in their school-days—even his own father had frequently reproached him for not winning the distinctions which Beauchamp had won. In College the same scenes had been repeated. It did not soothe Legrange's feelings to remember how Beauchamp had helped him with his tasks and had protected him at school from the tyranny and cruelty of stronger boys. No! these memories only added gall to the

bitterness of his cup, now filled to overflowing through his rejection by Lucille in favour of that hound, Beauchamp. "By Heaven, I will be revenged on him and I will conquer her yet when he shall be ruined through me." He sprang on his fiacre which had waited by his orders.

"Where shall I drive, monsieur?" asked his coachman.

"To the d——," roared Felix.

"Perhaps monsieur will name the gentleman's present address," replied the man with effrontery; he was accustomed to Legrange's outbursts of rage; the latter unfortunately left himself in the power of his servant, who could, if he wished, report to Legrange *père*, matters detrimental to the interests of Legrange *filis*.

"Bois de Boulogne," was the brief reply, which seemed to have been dictated by the spirit of darkness, for, on arriving near the Bois de Boulogne, whom should Felix see crossing the street, but the very man whose memory evoked the worst passion of his soul. He dismounted, bidding the driver await his return and approaching Victor, addressed him in a friendly manner.

It was characteristic of Felix Legrange that he was most dangerous when his manner was most suave.

"Well, my friend! why so pensive?" Victor shrank from the other's touch; that did not affect his interlocutor, whose apparent friendliness was rather increased thereby.

"It is such a lovely day!—an ideal one for a walk with a friend: we are old comrades and should be good friends."

"This is insupportable," thought Victor.

"If you are not too busy, let us take a turn together," continued Legrange. Victor's first impulse was to refuse; remembering, however, that he would soon be leaving France, he thought he might do well to part from his old companion in friendly terms, so consented.

In the course of conversation he informed Felix that he was about to leave France. Legrange was genuinely surprised, and expressed so much concern that Beauchamp told him the real cause of his expatriation. Conflicting hopes and fears battled in Legrange's breast: here might lie a chance of placing the unsuspecting Beauchamp in his power. A plan arose in his mind—it was as yet undefined, but the end would be—"Revenge!"

Assuring Victor of his deep concern and extorting a promise, that his comrade would take no decisive step for a few days, Felix bade him adieu, returned to his fiacre and drove rapidly to his father's office.

CHAPTER IV.

Hoodwinked.

M. Legrange had a cablegram in his hand when his son entered the room.

"Have you received bad news, father?" asked Felix; "you look worried."

"I have reason to be worried," replied his father. "I have here got notice from the governor of St. Pierre, that both the manager of my bank in St. Pierre dead."

Felix gave a prolonged whistle.

"The governor has himself sealed the safe of the bank and awaits my instructions."

"What will you do?"

"If I only had a son on whom I could rely, I would cable word that a manager would start for St. Pierre by the next steamer. Would that I had a son capable of undertaking such a responsibility!" and he looked reproachfully at Felix. "But idleness, gambling, theatres and worthless companions seem more to the taste of my son than assisting his father."

"Come now, father, don't waste your time and energy in scolding me: you would not like to see me a milk-sop, like that sneak Beauchamp."

"How I wish you were like him! a self-respecting, well educated, clever man of sterling ability; hard-working and trustworthy."

"Ye gods! what a catalogue of virtues! Why, my father has taken to moralising in his old age," replied Felix sarcastically, as envy added fuel to his hatred of Victor, whilst a diabolical plan gradually evolved itself in his mind.

"What would you think of sending this paragon of perfection to Martinique as manager with your Prodigal Son as his humble clerk and obedient apprentice?" he sneered.

"It is hopeless to speak of my difficulties to you. Go!" and M. Legrange turned away.

"Verily and indeed, father, this is the only feasible plan I see."

"What! you want me to take an employé from another bank in order to send him across the ocean to manage my affairs, and with an imbecile for his assistant?"

"Much obliged, I am sure," bowed Felix; "but let us pass by those little compliments. Come to business. I speak seriously, Victor Beauchamp is now free to accept your offer if you wish to make one, and I do not doubt it would be most acceptable to him." Having related the substance of his conversation with Beauchamp, Felix added: "So you see, father, his idiotic scrupulosity leaves him at your service."

"It does not seem to me so idiotic," mused the father. "A man who acts thus, evidently possesses the courage of his convictions and proves thereby that he can be depended upon. Can you say as much for yourself and the boon companions who are so ready to join you in every discreditable adventure?"

"Oh, confound it! Cease moralising, I am what you have made me. Is it for the bear to demand gentle manners from its cub? If you have no need of Beauchamp, say so, and I am off to the opera house. If you want him I am ready to bring him your offer and I am willing to accompany him as his assistant to St. Pierre: he will duly instruct me and make me a good boy. Truly I am a bit sick of the life here and would like a change."

His father looked at him keenly.

"Has Mdlle. Lucille rejected you?"

"She has had the bad taste not to value my manifold charms."

"I did not think you were so badly hit, my boy," said his father kindly. "Perhaps if you give her time she may relent."

"Oh, yes! when I return from the West Indies, crowned with laurels placed on my brow by the immaculate Victor, Mdlle. Lucille will be ready to open her arms to welcome the Prodigal Son." Felix laughed mockingly. M. Legrange sighed. This was the son for whom he had accumulated riches untold, on whom he had lavished all the love of his heart. The picture of Victor Beauchamp and his filial devotion to his old mother arose in painful contrast to the manner in which Felix usually addressed his father. Had there been a mistake somewhere in the education he had given his son? Could it be Beauchamp's religion that had made him the man he was? During the pause in the conversation Felix was also thinking: if he could only succeed in getting Beauchamp to the West Indies as bank manager with himself as subordinate!—well—let Beauchamp look to himself!

Changing his mocking tone to a respectful manner, Felix found little difficulty in persuading his father that he was really anxious to turn over a new leaf, which he could not do amidst the temptations of Paris, and that with Beauchamp's experience and example, he would have the best chance of acquiring the business-like habits added to the knowledge of a banker.

"The late manager may have died of yellow fever; do you not fear it?" queried M. Legrange.

"Bah—no! Man dies but once and he must die sometime," replied Felix, who was not devoid of personal courage.

So it was settled that he should carry his father's proposals to the manager-elect, who was offered £1000 a year on condition of undertaking the entire management and responsibility of the banking concerns of M. Legrange in the West Indies, the smaller bank in Port Royal being under the supervision of the manager in St. Pierre.

Victor was utterly incredulous when Felix informed him of this offer—a thousand pounds a year!—more than double the sum required by M. Delormes as the income of his daughter's future husband. When assured that this offer was *bona fide* and no chimera, Felix joyfully accepted it, though its acceptance was coupled with a feeling of tacit reproach.

"How much I must have misjudged Felix! To think that he, the son of a millionaire, is willing to occupy a subordinate post under me!—to learn from me!" wondered Victor, whose loyalty of character forbade a suspicion of the other's integrity of purpose. When such a suspicion could intrude itself unbidden, Victor resolutely rejected it.

"What earthly object could he have in view in thus expatriating himself and in exposing himself to the deadly West Indian climate?" Beauchamp asked himself.

The steamer was to sail for Martinique the following week and berths were taken in it for Felix and Victor. M. Legrange had a long and confidential interview with the latter, on whom he impressed the necessity of tact and caution when dealing with Felix, whose good resolutions would probably evanesce before the end of the voyage.

"If you succeed in making my son a steady, trustworthy man of business, you may regard your own fortune as made," he said. Victor promised to do his utmost to carry out M. Legrange's wishes in every particular.

Felix, in order to ingratiate himself with M. Delormes, induced his father to settle satisfactorily the business transaction, the success of which had been hinged to his acceptance by Lucille, whom Felix, in spite of her refusal, still resolved to win as his wife as soon as his rival was ruined. His egotistical interference had the opposite effect—as M. Delormes was now free from monetary difficulties, he was easily induced to condone Lucille's offence in rejecting Felix Legrange's suit, and whilst sternly forbidding any engagement between Lucille and Victor, still, his penchant for the latter asserted itself by giving him an invitation to dinner on the eve of departure.

Madame Bunsen told Victor to write to her from his transatlantic home. "You know we shall be anxious until we hear from you," she said with a smile, looking archly at Lucille.

(To be continued.)

In Thanksgiving, &c.

Miss O'Farrell sends two-and-sixpence towards expenses of the Cause of Gemma Galgani in thanksgiving for temporal favour received through her intercession.

F. P. returns grateful thanks to Gemma Galgani for great favours received through her intercession and encloses donation of one shilling towards the expenses of her Cause, with promise of further donation.

Sr. M. Philomena (Roscommon) sends three-and-sixpence towards expenses of the Cause of Blessed Gabriel, from some clients of his.

Sr. M. A. J. (Monaghan) sends £1 towards the expenses of the Cause of Gemma Galgani.

Anon. (per Rev. Fr. Sebastian) sends £5 towards the expenses of Beatification of Gemma Galgani and the Little Flower of Jesus, to be divided equally between their Causes.

Joan M. B. asks prayers to obtain a much-needed favour through the intercession of St. Paul of the Cross, in return for which she will have a novena of Masses celebrated for the souls in Purgatory and offer prayers for those praying for her intention.

A Client of Blessed Gabriel (Smithtown, New South Wales) writes: "Some time ago I took ill, so ill that it was thought my last hour had come; but I prayed to Blessed Gabriel and promised that if I got well I would make it known. My request was granted, but I neglected fulfilling my promise until I got ill again, and again I prayed to the saint and I am now quite well. I wish to give thanks to Blessed Gabriel for this and also for many other blessings I received through him."



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Conducted by FRANCIS.

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III. They will at all times observe the conditions under which the competitions will be held.

IV. They will endeavour to bring as many new members as they can into the Guild of Blessed Gabriel.

"THE spring is stealing into Ireland," writes a very dear friend to me this month, and that one sentence describes the whole situation. Though to all intents and purposes, and to all appearances, at the first glance, winter is still with us, the advance guards of beautiful spring are already stealing over the glens and hills, giving as they go the note of a song to the birds in the bushes, and scattering everywhere showers of soft and tender buds that peep out shyly at us as we pass, and that seem to ask us in a nervous whisper if we have seen signs of their deadly enemy, Jack Frost, anywhere. There is a stretch in the days, a lilt of hope and joy in the breeze, an awakening all about us that we hardly notice, and in our hearts there is a throb of response and welcome that as yet we cannot make articulate. Thanks be to God, the winter is nearly past, the dark, short days are gone for a time, the hedges and trees and fields are about to leave their mourning and resume the garb that best becomes them. "The spring is stealing into Ireland." May its hope and its gladness steal over all the earth full soon, in the wake of a just and lasting peace, and may all men and all nations feel the echo of the song-birds lilting in their hearts!

I am delighted that so many members in their letters this month have promised to do their utmost to spread the influence of the Guild and the circulation of THE CROSS during 1916.

My Post Bag. The present is a trying time for proprietors of magazines, as for everybody else, and though the Editor assures me that never was THE CROSS higher in the favour of the reading public, still I am sure, if he would only admit it, that he has many an anxious hour, and it is the duty of every single one of us to help him all we can. The Guild members can do this best by speaking of the Guild and THE CROSS to their friends who as yet are not readers of this magazine, and by asking their parents to mention its name when purchasing from the firms who advertise in it. **Julia M. Kennedy**, in returning thanks for her prize volume, writes: "I have shown the volume to one of the nuns in Gardiner-street, who will show it to the girls in her school, and I am sure it will encourage them to join the Guild and enter for the competitions. I hope to bring you five new recruits next month." That's the sort of letter that lights my heart with joy! Another zealous worker is **Mary Rennie**, of Sutton Oak, in Lancashire, England, who writes:—"It is with joy I look back over the past year and think of the great pleasure I have derived from membership of the Guild. I will strive in future to be worthy of it and to spread devotion to Blessed Gabriel among my school companions." Mary brings into the Guild this month a new member—**Vera Wainwright**—who is heartily welcome, and who, in turn, I am sure, will do good work for the Guild in Lancashire. **Eily Barrett** thinks it is awful that the members must grow old and step out of the ranks of the competitors, but I think they can do a great deal for us as honorary members, and they need not drop all correspondence with FRANCIS. **Chrissie Burke** has no intention of giving us up, at all events, and I am quite sure every honorary member will continue to look upon FRANCIS as a personal friend and write him a letter from time to time. Every letter written by **Lilian Mary Nally** contains some sweet and noble thought. Here is what she writes in the course of a letter about shattered ideals:—"The things that we dream of are not always best, and from the fragments of a broken ideal one could build something real and worth having—a friendship, perhaps, reaching beyond time and beyond the stars, right into Heaven." See what beautiful thoughts you can garner from the garden of unspoiled minds in a Guild such as ours! A new member from Harrogate, in England, comes to us this month in the person of **Freda Bottomley**, and it is with pleasure I welcome her into the Guild. There will soon be as many members on the other side of the Channel as there are here in Ireland. I hope they won't then be trying to establish a new Guild and find a new FRANCIS of their own, because I don't want to lose even one of them. I was very sorry to learn from **May Allen**, of

Arklow, that her friend and comrade, **Sarah Jenkinson**, had been ill for a long time. I trust she is now fully recovered. May means to do great work for the Guild during the year. More power to her! Writing of the gloom and desolation the New Year found in almost every land on earth, **Katie Kavanagh** sounds a note of hope:—"The dark days will not always last; there will dawn ere long a bright ray of hope which may expand into marvellous brightness and lie before us like a silent, sparkling ocean, 'threaded with silver tissues of foam.'" I am very grateful to Katie for all her good wishes. **Julia Wall's** one hope is that when her term of active membership of the Guild comes to an end she may receive as nice a send-off as Chrissie Burke, and that she may have even one trophy to remind her always of FRANCIS and all her friends. There is no reason why her hope should not be realised. Perseverance is a great wonder-worker. Two new members from the Kingdom of Kerry are **Bride Sweeney** and **Chrissie Sweeney**, of Tralee, who mean to get THE CROSS every month in future and to interest all their young friends in the Guild. They are heartily welcome to a place in our midst. All the way from France a New Year card and a cheery message came to me from **Josie O'Brien**, to whom I send my very sincere thanks and every good wish for success and happiness. Another of the O'Brien clan—my dear friend, **Maureen**—sent me two cards and so many good wishes that I was hard set to count them all. I hope every one of them will come back into Maureen's own life, increased a thousand-fold.

(1). All newcomers will please write a personal note to FRANCIS apart from their competition papers, asking to be admitted to membership of the Guild. (2). A Badge, bearing the portrait of Blessed Gabriel, is awarded to the member who brings five new recruits into the Guild.

For the best set of three quotations on spring, the prize is awarded to **Bride Sweeney**, Basin View, Tralee, Co. Kerry. I was well pleased with the quotations sent in by **Julia Wall**, **Freda Bottomley**, **Mary Rennie**, **Sheila Murphy**, **Willie Ryan**, **May Byrne** and **James Walsh**.

For the best legend of St. Brigid, I have awarded the prize to **Brigid Trainor**, 16 Annalee-street, Belfast, and it is with very great pleasure I award a special merit mark to the papers sent by **Josie Power**, **Mollie Quinn**, **Patrick Breen**, **Annie Costello**, **Chrissie Sweeney**, and **Maureen O'Brien**.

THE NEXT COMPETITIONS.

I.—For Members over 12 and under 18 years of age.

A handsome Book Prize is offered for the best short essay on "Two March Saints."

II.—For Members under 12 years of age.

A handsome Book Prize is offered for the best legend of the shamrock.

All compositions must be certified by some responsible person as being the unaided work of the competitors. They must have attached to them the coupon which will be found in this issue (one coupon will be sufficient for all the members of a family), and essays must be written on **one side only** of the paper. They must be sent so as to reach the Office of **THE CROSS** not later than **February 14th**. All letters to be addressed:—FRANCIS, c/o THE CROSS, St. Paul's Retreat, Mount Argus, Dublin.

PRIZE QUOTATIONS.

"SPRING."

I.

Spring is coming. "Yes, its blue skies are over us—its soft breezes shall fan us—the fragrance of its myriad flowers be wafted to us. Its mossy carpet shall be spread for our careless feet; our languid limbs shall be laved at its cool fountains. Its luscious fruits shall send health through our leaping veins, while from mountain top, and wooded hill, and flower-wreathed valley, shall float one glad anthem of praise from tiniest feathered throats."—From Fanny Fern's "Shadows and Sunbeams."

II.

"What a thrill of delight in spring-time. What a joy in being and moving. Men are at work in gardens; and in the air there is an odour of the earth. The leaf-buds begin to swell and blush. The white blossoms of the cherry hang upon the boughs like snowflakes; and ere long our next-door neighbours will be completely hidden from us by the dense green foliage. The May flowers open their soft blue eyes. Children are let loose in the fields and gardens. They hold buttercups under each other's chins, to see if they love butter, and the little girls adorn themselves with chains and curls of dandelion; pull out the yellow leaves to see if the school-boy loves them, and blow the down from the leafless stalk, to find out if their mothers want them at home."—From prose writings of Longfellow.

III.

"Gentle spring!—in sunshine clad,
Well dost thou my power display!
For winter maketh the light heart sad,
And thou—thou makest the sad heart gay.
He sees thee, and calls to his gloomy train,
The sleet, and the snow, and the wind, and the rain,
And they shrink away, and they flee in fear,
When thy merry step draws near."

—From Longfellow's poetical works.

BRIDE SWEENEY.